



# FEMA

## *Mitigated Homes Remain Standing in New Orleans After Katrina*

**New Orleans, LA** - Torrance Green's construction company had nearly completed two homes in New Orleans when Hurricane Katrina struck in August 2005. The hurricane brought 100 mph winds and floodwaters up to 10 feet above grade, demolishing neighboring residences, but both of Green's structures survived the devastation thanks to his strict adherence to sound mitigation techniques.

The first structure is a two-family home built on chain wall footing, and elevated five feet above grade with reinforced concrete block columns. The frame is securely fastened to the foundation with anchor bolts, nuts, and washers. The windows are partially enclosed, the siding is nailed loosely with a quarter of an inch of give, and the roof is fitted to the frame with heavy-duty hurricane straps and connectors. The good condition of this house within a shattered neighborhood demonstrates that Mr. Green's construction techniques should be put to standard use in hurricane-prone areas.

The second house that was under construction when Katrina hit is a single-family, shotgun-style home. Like the first home, it is a lone survivor in a neighborhood that witnessed extensive destruction from high winds and flooding. The house constructed by Mr. Green's company remains standing, however, because it was well-built with hurricane-resistant materials and elevated to the pre-Katrina Base Flood Elevation (BFE).

Mr. Green noted that both of his construction sites were protected with flood insurance, which has lessened the impact of the hurricane on his livelihood.

Following Katrina, Mr. Green also inspected a house he built the previous year in the Lower Ninth Ward, an area notorious for how hard it was hit by the storm. Upon arrival to Delery Street, he found the remnants of what used to be people's homes. The house that Green constructed stood alone among the wreckage. Except for some internal water damage, the house was almost unharmed. In fact, every roof shingle remained in place and even the turbine vent was still spinning.

Torrance Green knows how to build a house to withstand hurricane forces. He has been in the construction business in the New Orleans area for seven years, and has learned how to properly mitigate the natural hazards of the region. Hurricane-resistant construction materials and practices are no secret, Green insists, and in this part of the country they should be routinely utilized. Mitigation measures, along with flood insurance, are likely to help protect homes from flood loss and provide homeowners with peace of mind.



**Orleans Parish,  
Louisiana**



### **Quick Facts**

Sector:

**Private**

Cost:

**Amount Not Available**

Primary Activity/Project:

**Flood-proofing**

Primary Funding:

**Homeowner**